

Baby Steps: Quality Infant/Toddler Care Project

Project Overview 2006-2007

Eligibility

Initial Eligibility

- Licensed and licensed exempt, full time child care centers with infant and/or toddler rooms dedicated to children under the age of 2 years are eligible.
- Centers holding an Hourly Child Care license or providing child care in resort or gym/spa settings are not eligible.
- Centers that have been suspended from grant eligibility by the Office of Child Care are not eligible for the duration of the suspension.

To remain eligible in future years, centers must:

- Meet the annual staff training goals and fulfill their quality improvement goals.
- If centers do not meet these goals by the end of each year, they will not be eligible to reapply for one year. They will need to have met all of the original goals before reapplying.

What participants will receive

- Centers will receive a \$1200.00 grant for each group of four infants/toddlers.
- Each program will also receive \$320.00 towards covering the cost of wages paid to caregivers while they attend the required Infant/Toddler Endorsement classes.
- Invoices will be submitted three times a year and payments will be based on the Average Daily Attendance of designated months.

Required quality improvement activities

- Training: Each center director and at least one infant/toddler caregiver per group of children must complete the Infant/Toddler Endorsement classes within the first year of participation. The endorsement consists of forty hours of class time, with four 10-hour courses.
 - If a caregiver leaves the program, the caregiver who replaces her must begin attending the first available course.
 - The classes are offered through the Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (CCR&Rs) throughout the state. The courses can be taken in any order and staff may attend classes taught by CCR&Rs outside their geographical area. (It may be necessary to take classes this summer. You should check with your R&R immediately.)
 - All staff who complete the Infant Toddler Endorsement will be eligible for a \$100.00 award through the Career Ladder program.

- Centers are required to pay caregivers for class attendance based on their usual wage.
- In the Metro and Northern regions, special arrangements are made to reserve space in the classes for Baby Steps participants. Only staff that are required by the project to complete the endorsement should take advantage of the special arrangements. If you do not know your CCR&Rs process for enrolling in classes, please contact them. Only the director and ONE caregiver per room are required to obtain the endorsement. All other staff are welcome to sign up for these classes if there are openings.
- Failure to complete the endorsement classes in the first year of participation in the program will make the center INELIGIBLE for at least one year. To reenter the program, the training would need to be completed.
- Observations: The Infant/Toddler Specialist s will complete an annual observation using the ITERS-R in each participating classroom.
 - A three to four hour observation is required to complete the assessment.
 - After the observation, the Specialist will provide you with the results.
- Quality Improvement Goals: Goals are set based on the results of the ITERS-R.
 - You will choose one goal for **EACH** of the seven sub-scale of the ITERS-R.
 - The Infant/Toddler Specialist will help you develop a plan to meet your goals.
 - When ever possible, you will need to choose items you have not worked on in the past.
 - Goals are listed on the Work Plan and submitted with the Baby Steps application. Progress is reported on the Work Plan each time an invoice for payment is submitted.
- Equipment Purchases: At least 20% of the grant must be spent on equipment and materials for the classrooms.
 - All equipment purchases must be completed and receipts submitted by May 1, 2007.
 - There are some limits on equipment purchases.
 - Participants may use the remainder of the grant to pay for a portion of infant and toddler room costs, such as staff wages, fees for staff training, mortgage or utilities.
- Documentation: Centers must submit documentation of the following with each invoice:
 - Attendance records for the target month to support the Average Daily Attendance figure.
 - Receipts documenting equipment purchases made during the billing period.
 - Pay stubs or other documentation showing that staff have been paid for time spent in infant/toddler endorsement classes.
 - A training report listing classes completed during the invoice period.

Invoice Process

- Invoices are submitted according to the schedule below.
- When you send the invoice, you must enclose the following:

- Invoice
- Training Report
- Attendance Record for the target month
- Documentation of staff wages if they attended training.
- Late invoices may not be processed until the next deadline.

Outside Assessments

- The Office of Child Care will complete an ITERS-R's in each participating classroom during each year of the project.
 - Centers will be notified in advance of all observations for the ITERS-R.
 - In addition to helping you set solid quality improvement goals, these ITERS-R's assess the effectiveness of the Baby Steps Project in increasing the quality of care in participating centers and provide the office with required financial and audit information.
 - These observations may also be used to train new Consultants and/or to complete reliability checks.

Audit Controls

- To fulfill requirements placed on our office by state and federal auditors, attendance records may be matched to sign in/out sheets or computer records to check for accuracy of the Average Daily Attendance figures. These records will be checked on site. Appointments may or may not be made in advance.

APPLICATION AND INVOICE DEADLINES

2006/2007

Region (CCR&Rs included)	Application Due Date	First Invoice	Second Invoice and receipts due	Third Invoice
Northern (Northern & Bridgerland)	May 31, 2006	Aug. 15, 2006	Dec. 15, 2006	April 15, 2007
Metro	June 7, 2006	Sept. 15, 2006	Jan. 15, 2007	May 15, 2007
Southern (Mountainland, Eastern, Western)	June 14, 2006	Oct. 15, 2006	Feb. 15, 2007	May 15, 2007

First invoice based on average daily attendance (ADA) for July 2006

Second invoice based on ADA for November 2006

Third invoice based on ADA for March 2007